

REMARKS

Claims 1-10 and 12-48 will be pending upon entry of the present amendment. Claims 1, 3, 12-14, 16, and 18-20 are amended, claim 11 is cancelled, and new claims 40-48 are newly submitted herewith.

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating the allowability of claims 12-28 and 34-39, and the allowability of the subject matter of claims 2, 4, 7-10, 32, and 33.

Claim 12 has been amended to broaden the scope of the claim. The limitation removed from claim 12 is now found in new dependent claim 41. Additionally, amendments to claims 13, 14, and 18-20, and the new claim 42, are provided to more accurately claim various aspects of the invention. None of the amendments to claim 12 or its dependent claims are made for the purpose of defining the claims over prior art, or for reasons of patentability of the claims. Accordingly, applicants do not disclaim any claim scope, with respect to the doctrine of equivalents, to which they would be otherwise entitled.

Claims 1, 3, 5, 6, 11, 29, and 31 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Hamma, US Pat. No. 5,248,960.

Claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the limitation of dependent claim 11, the rejection of which is respectfully traversed. Claim 1 recites, in part, "the first tool translation effector device including controlling means for selectively varying a tension on the first cable." In rejecting claim 11, Hamma is cited as anticipating this limitation. Specifically, the Examiner points to the spring at column 7, lines 47-56. The cited passage of Hamma reads, in relevant part, "flexible member holding reel 45 is constructed with a spring biasing member incorporated therein, in order to continuously urge reel 45 into its fully wound position." *Id.*, column 7, lines 47-50. Nothing in this passage, nor in any other part of Hamma, indicates that the spring bias is selectively variable. While applicants recognize that the tension of a spring will inherently vary as the spring is wound or unwound, in an arrangement as described by Hamma, the variance would be negligible. More importantly, one of ordinary skill in the art would not understand the term *means for selectively varying*, as used in claim 11, to include the normal operation of a spring as described by Hamma. Accordingly, Hamma cannot anticipate means for selectively varying a tension on the first cable, and thus fails to anticipate all the limitations of claim 1.

Claim 1 is clearly allowable over Hamma. Dependent claims 2-10 and 40 are also allowable as depending from an allowable base claim.

With regard to the rejections of claims 3, 5, and 6, applicants believe that these claims are allowable on their own merits, apart from their allowability as dependent claims of claim 1. For example, claim 3 recites, in part, “a controller configured to direct the first tool translation effector device to retract ...,” while Hamma does not directly control retraction of its cursor, but only provides a passive spring retraction system; claim 5 recites the establishing means, including “at least one sensor configured to determining a position of the attachment point relative to the first tool translation effector device,” while Hamma does not provide any sensor for determining a position of its cursor, but relies on the operator moving the cursor to a predetermined position during the initial set up (see *Hamma*, column 10, lines 43-50); and claim 6 recites the establishing means, including “means for reestablishing the distance from time to time during operation.” For its part, Hamma teaches that “[o]nce this initial set up has been made, any movement of pointer 25 relative to housing 21 causes the computer system to move the cursor or image on the screen to the location to which pointer 25 has been moved.” There is no teaching to reestablish the distance, as recited in claim 6. Clearly, Hamma fails to anticipate any of these limitations. Accordingly, claims 3, 5, and 6 are each separately allowable over Hamma.

Claim 29 recites, in part, “applying tension to each of a plurality of cables ....” Hamma fails to anticipate this limitation. Hamma is directed to a device that employs a single flexible member coupled to an elongated arm that is pivotable through an arc of about 180°. By sensing the angle of the arm and the amount of wire dispensed, a position of the cursor in two dimensions (i.e., the surface of a display or screen) can be determined (see column 3, line 55-column 4, line 5). Hamma fails to teach a plurality of cables. Accordingly, claim 29 is allowable over Hamma, together with dependent claims 30-33 and 43.

New claims 40-48 are fully supported by the specification. In particular, support for new independent claim 44 and dependent claims 45-48 can be found in the specification beginning at page 31, line 13.

The Director is authorized to charge any additional fees due by way of this Amendment, or credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 19-1090.

All of the claims remaining in the application are now clearly allowable. Favorable consideration and a Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,  
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